

# NOME OF BUBASTIS - 1

## ■ Introduction

Ancient Egyptians lived along a very narrow band of land that was made fertile by the Nile River's yearly flooding. They called this land KMT (**kemet**, or the Black Land, for the dark color of its earth). All else was DSHRT (**deshret**, or the Red Land, for its red sands and scorching heat). Another name for ancient Egypt is **Tamera**, "the land of the inundation."

From earliest times Ancient Egyptians unified neighboring villages into districts called **hesep**, or in Greek, **nome**. Each nome had its own government, capital city, protective god or gods, and temple. The nomes had carefully marked boundaries with records kept of their amount of farm land and their canals with all their branches. Each nome had a standard, a portable sign that included an image of the nome deity or a symbol of religious power.

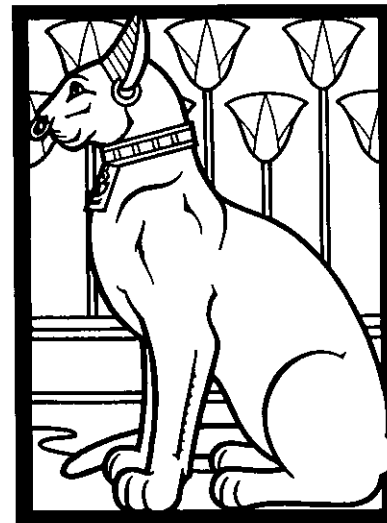
## ■ About the nome

- You are a member of the nome of Bubastis, originally called **Am-chent**, "Upper (Egyptian) Royal Child," the eighteenth nome of lower Egypt. Its capital city was Pa-Bast, better known by its Greek name of **Bubastis**, the name given to the nome. Today the city is called Tell Basta.
- Bubastis gained prominence very early in Egyptian history, at least partly because of its strategically important location, which controlled the routes from Memphis to Sinai and to Asia.



## ■ Gods of Bubastis

- The goddess of Bubastis was **Bastet** or **Bast**, mother of **Miysis**, "the "Lord of Slaughter," the "savage-faced lion-god." Bastet was also known as the cat goddess. She was the daughter of Ra, the sun.
- Bast was said to have defended **Ra** (or Ra was said to take the form of a great cat to fight) against **Apophis**, the dragon or serpent that would devour him. The great cat was a wild cat with a short tail that was different from the domestic version.
- Bastet was connected with the moon as well, and in myth she became the eye of the moon.
- Bastet was the protector of women and the pleasure-loving goddess who served as the patroness of music and dance. She also was believed to protect people from diseases and demons.
- Her yearly festival was celebrated throughout the land in lighthearted barge processions.
- Bast was depicted as a woman with a cat's head carrying a sistrum, the sign of life—the **ankh**, a box or a basket, or as the head of a lioness surrounded by many necklaces.
- Because of their connection to the goddess, cats were revered and mummified. The **domestic cat** was admired for its strength and agility. Domestic cats were mummified and interred in the famous cemetery of cats in Bubastis in the hopes the donor might share in Bastet's grace. (By the way, the Egyptian word for cat was **miu**.)
- In the nineteenth Century, 300,000 cat mummies were taken from Bubastis to Europe where they were ground up and used as fertilizer!



# NOME OF BUBASTIS - 2

## ■ General Rules for Egyptians

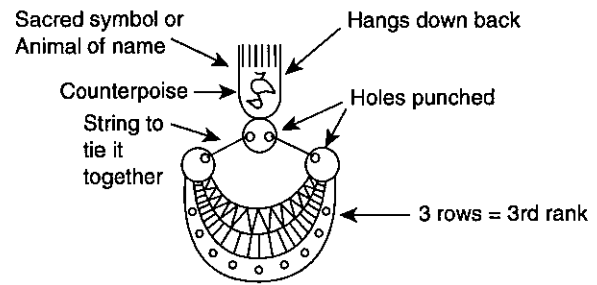
As an **Egyptian**, you must preserve "**Maat**," an important ethical concept that combines "order, truth, justice, and righteousness."

1. Keep your nome area neat and organize all your efforts.
2. Be honest in all you say, and do not claim others' work as your own.
3. Be fair and listen carefully to fellow Egyptians. The Instruction of Amenemopet says: "Give your ears to hear what is said. Give your heart to understand what is said."
4. Be a committed member of "the Land of the Nile."

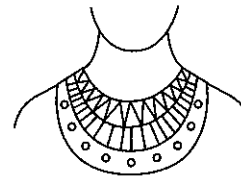
## ■ Rules for Bubastites

1. As a Bubastite you can be both fierce in your pursuit of honor to your nome and fun-loving. Like your honored animal, the cat, you know when to hunt carefully and when to play with ideas to reap the greatest benefits.
2. Your nome is known for its enjoyment of music and dance. In your drawings, sculptures, presentations, and writing show the importance of these arts in your daily life.
3. Bastet was often shown with a gold earring in one ear. Your nome members might want to wear one to honor the patron goddess of Bubastis.
4. Include the symbols of Bast in your works: the sistrum, the ankh, the lion, the cat, the moon and the basket.
5. Be like the great cat: fierce in protecting members of your nome, strong in your efforts to be the best, agile in your ability to see what needs to be done and beginning quickly.
6. Fight the dragon of ignorance and darkness of spirit with your careful research, positive outlook and lighthearted attitude.

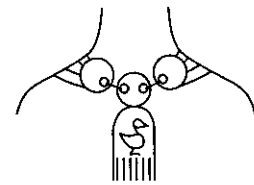
In consequence, Ra and the clear rays of the moon will shine on your nome, **Maat** will be honored, and your names will be sung as lions of the Nile.



Menat  
Necklace



Front View



Back View

## ■ Nome Assignment:

1. Create a **nome standard**, including the number of your nome. Use the symbols and colors of your nome deity.
2. Decide who is to be the **noble of your nome** (first rank); the **administrator** (second rank); the **scribe** (third rank); the **artisan** (fourth rank). The rest of the members of your nome will be the **laborers or farmers** (fifth rank).
3. Each member of the nome is to make a **menat** showing rank by the number of rows: first rank (the noble)—five rows; second rank (the administrator)—four rows; third rank (the scribe)—three rows; fourth rank (the artisan)—two rows; and fifth rank (the laborer or farmer)—one row.
4. The **menat** should use the distinctive colors and/or symbols of your nome.
5. Make a **headband** for each member of your nome, using either an uraeus representing Wedjat or a vulture representing Nekhbet. Nomes in Lower Egypt need to make an uraeus with a cobra; nomes in Upper Egypt need to make a nekhbet with a vulture.